



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/089,061	04/04/2002	Michel Pineri	221282US0XPCT	3063

22850 7590 07/26/2004

OBLON, SPIVAK, MCCLELLAND, MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.
1940 DUKE STREET
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

HAMPTON HIGHTOWER, PATRICIA

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

1711

DATE MAILED: 07/26/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/089,061

Applicant(s)

PINERI ET AL.

Examiner

Patricia Hightower

Art Unit

1711

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 April 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-28 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 04 April 2002 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
- * See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 4/4/2002.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____.

Art Unit: 1711

Information Disclosure Statement

The information disclosure statement filed April 04, 2002 has been considered and has been made of record.

Response to Amendment

The preliminary amendment filed April 04, 2004 is acknowledged; claims 1-28 are presently pending.

Specification

The abstract of the disclosure is objected to because the abstract appears on two (2) separate sheets and it should appear on only one (1) sheet in single paragraph form comprised of a 150 words or less. Correction is required. See MPEP § 608.01(b).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 8,17,20,21 and 28 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

In claims 8 and 20 the term "alcoxy" should have been spelled with the letter "k" instead of the letter "c"; --alkoxy--. It is suggested that the applicants substitute the correct spelling --alkoxy--, in each instance for the term "alcoxy" as it appears in claims 8 and 20.

Claims 17 and 28 recite the limitations "the process according to claim 8 and the process according to claim 20" in claim 17 at line 1 and claim 28 at line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claim.

Regarding claim 8, the phrase "for example" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitation(s) following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Regarding claim 21, the phrase "such as" renders the claim indefinite because it is unclear whether the limitations following the phrase are part of the claimed invention. See MPEP § 2173.05(d).

Obviousness-type Double Patenting Rejection

The nonstatutory double patenting rejection is based on a judicially created doctrine grounded in public policy (a policy reflected in the statute) so as to prevent the unjustified or improper timewise extension of the "right to exclude" granted by a patent and to prevent possible harassment by multiple assignees. See *In re Goodman*, 11 F.3d 1046, 29 USPQ2d 2010 (Fed. Cir. 1993); *In re Longi*, 759 F.2d 887, 225 USPQ 645 (Fed. Cir. 1985); *In re Van Ornum*, 686 F.2d 937, 214 USPQ 761 (CCPA 1982); *In re Vogel*, 422 F.2d 438, 164 USPQ 619 (CCPA 1970); and, *In re Thorington*, 418 F.2d 528, 163 USPQ 644 (CCPA 1969).

A timely filed terminal disclaimer in compliance with 37 CFR 1.321(c) may be used to overcome an actual or provisional rejection based on a nonstatutory double patenting ground provided the conflicting application or patent is shown to be commonly owned with this application. See 37 CFR 1.130(b).

Effective January 1, 1994, a registered attorney or agent of record may sign a terminal disclaimer. A terminal disclaimer signed by the assignee must fully comply with 37 CFR 3.73(b).

Claims 1-18 and 20-28 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,425,944. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instant application and the patent (USP

Art Unit: 1711

6,425,944) are viewed as claiming overlapping subject matter; a membrane comprising a sulfonated polyimide. The patent and the instant application are claiming a product – a membrane comprising a sulfonated polyimide that appears to be prepared from identical reactants with only a slight difference in the arrangement of the resulting sulfonated polyimide. Therefore, in view of the overlapping subject matter it is viewed that one set of claims cannot be infringed without literally infringing the other set of claims and an obviousness-type double patenting rejection is proper.

Claims 1-17 and 20-28 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-14 of U.S. Patent No. 6,245,881. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instant application and the patent (USP 6,245,881) are viewed as claiming overlapping subject matter; a sulfonated polyimide prepared from overlapping reactants. In an instance in which one set of claims cannot be infringed without literally infringing those of the other set of claims, an obviousness-type double patenting rejection is proper.

Claims 1-18,19,20-28 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over claims 1-3 of U.S. Patent No. 6,376,129. Although the conflicting claims are not identical, they are not patentably distinct from each other because the instant application and the patent (USP 6,376,129) are viewed as claiming overlapping subject matter – a fuel cell device comprising at least one membrane comprising a sulfonated polyimide in which the sulfonated polyimide appears to be prepared from overlapping reactants. In an instance

where one set of claims cannot be infringed without literally infringing the other set of claims, an obviousness-type double patenting rejection is proper.

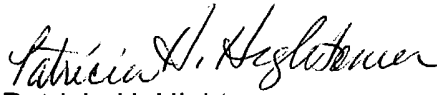
Prior Art

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure. These references are cited to show the state of the art of aromatic sulfonated polyimides and use as membranes and methods of separation; Pinery, Okada and Nakanishi.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Patricia Hightower whose telephone number is (571) 272-1073. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F from 9:30 A.M. - 6:00 P.M.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, James Seidleck can be reached on (571) 272-1078. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Patricia H. Hightower
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1711